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ABSTRACT

The ability to meet people, visit places around the globe, and make purchases online has added a new dimension to teaching children about the opportunities and accompanying risks that exist in everyday life. The Direct Marketing Association has created this guide to information use, behavior, and privacy on the Internet to help parents supervise their children's learning experiences, even for parents who do not understand the technology well enough to oversee their children's online use. Areas addressed include: (1) how common sense applies to the Internet, easy-to-use parental control technologies, and what the Internet offers; (2) a short quiz to see how much parents already know about the Internet and to get them prepared for other activities; (3) a guided tour, including e-mail, Listservs, World Wide Web, uniform resource locators, and encryption, for parents to follow in the workbook or online at the computer; (4) sample cases of real situations parents and children may encounter online, including issues of personal information, surveys, web stores, password, and directories, and the opportunity to discuss them; and (5) how to develop a set of rules and guidelines for enjoying cyberspace in families, which includes a family pledge document for each family member to sign. (SD)

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The DMA's Guide to Parenting Skills for the Digital Age: Online Basics, Behavior and Privacy

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Cyber Savvy

A Family Guide

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THE DMA
Direct Marketing Association

Get CyberSavvy

Introduction

The Direct Marketing Association (The DMA) is pleased to provide your family with *Get **CyberSavvy! The DMA's Guide to Parenting Skills** for the Digital Age: **Online Basics, Behavior and Privacy.***

In today's world, the ability to meet people, visit places around the globe **and make purchases** online has added a new dimension to teaching **children about the** opportunities and accompanying risks that exist in **everyday life. That** is why The DMA has created this guide to information **use, behavior and** privacy on the Internet. It's safe to say that if the Inter**net is not already** a part of your children's everyday experience, it will be **very soon.**

As parents, we have a responsibility to supervise our children's learning **experiences**; however, when it comes to the Internet, many of us say we **could** use a little help. Many of us, quite frankly, don't understand the technology well enough to oversee our children's online experiences.

Here's what you will find in the following pages:

Page 2 How common sense applies to the Internet and easy-to-use parental control technologies.

Page 7 A short quiz to see how much you already know about the Internet and to get you prepared for the following activities.

Page 10 From e-mail to encryption, a guided tour that you will be able to follow in this workbook or online at your computer.

Page 17 "What Should I Do If..." situations to give you a sample of real situations you and your family may encounter online and the opportunity to discuss them.

Page 21 Finally, your family can use the knowledge you have learned through this workbook to develop your own set of rules and guidelines for enjoying cyberspace—all you have to do is fill in the blanks.

So let's get started!

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New Medium: Traditional Common Sense

Each and every day, we work to keep up with our children, take an interest in their activities and secure their well-being. While the Internet may be a new environment for many of us, the same common sense rules we put in place for our children to follow every day still apply. In fact, keeping up with children on the Internet is really not much different from knowing where they go to play, who they see each day, or if they look both ways before crossing the street.

The Internet, cyberspace, the Information Superhighway, the Net—whatever you choose to call it—is really a public gathering place, accessed by computers. People go online for many different reasons—to make friends, to talk to interesting people, to entertain themselves, to join in educational experiences, to get information and to conduct business. While the options that exist on the Internet are vast, like any public gathering place, there are basic rules parents and children should discuss and follow. Many of the rules we put in place on the Internet are the same as other common sense do's and don'ts. For example:

If you, as a parent, want to meet all of your children's playmates and wouldn't let your children talk to strangers on the street,

Then you would want to "meet" their online friends and set rules about talking to strangers online, as well.

If you wouldn't want your children to give out personal information about your family in a public forum,

Then you wouldn't want your children to give out that information in online forums either. You would want to know to whom they are giving information and how it will be used.

If you wouldn't allow your children to go into a store to shop by themselves in an unfamiliar city,

Then you wouldn't allow them to make unsupervised purchases online.

If you wouldn't want your children to purchase a product or service on the phone without knowing if a company or business is legitimate,

Then you wouldn't want them to make uninformed purchases over the Internet either.

If... Then

The Internet provides families with a new world of opportunities, but its boundaries prohibit face-to-face contact and require an extra level of care as families define their own criteria for meeting and communicating with people online.

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What the Internet Offers

The Internet offers families unlimited opportunities to explore and enjoy new worlds of information. How you get involved in your children's online experience will depend on the age and maturity of your children and how much autonomy you, as a parent, feel they can handle. On the Internet, your children will:

Explore

Meet People Remember the days when we wrote to pen pals in foreign countries and waited for weeks or months for a response? Now your children can talk to their online pen pals every day. The Internet provides children with the opportunity to meet people from other countries and communicate with children around the world through e-mail and "kids-only" chat rooms. If you want to meet your children's new-found friends in school or in your neighborhood, you will want to set the same rules online.

Entertain Themselves Artwork, books, programs and games are all available on the Internet for your family's enjoyment. Children can even participate in innovative and interactive games with players from the other side of the globe. You should supervise your children's play online, just as you would at your local playground.

Learn The Internet provides an incredible array of educational opportunities for children, ranging from online museums and hands-on projects to educational puzzles and challenges. By visiting educational sites on the Internet, your children can learn about history, science and math from online tutors — real teachers — who volunteer their time to answer questions or help with school projects. Just as many parents like to meet with their children's teachers, the same concept can apply online with a little extra care.

Get Information Using the Internet, your children can access libraries around the corner or around the world. It is an incredible asset for producing that prize-winning project that your children may be researching. If you usually keep an eye on your children's reading choices from your local library, you will want to do the same online.

Shop

Shop Imagine the businesses of the world all in one giant mall! The Internet offers thousands of storefronts for browsing, inquiring about detailed product information and buying. Parents and children can visit the sites of their favorite companies to learn about new products and to enjoy the entertainment value these sites provide. But remember, you will want to supervise your children's purchases, just as you would in your local mall or with a familiar mail order company.

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Family-Friendly Tips

Spend Time Online Together One of the best ways to ensure a meaningful online experience for children is to explore the Internet together to learn what your children do and see online. Spending time online with your children provides an opportunity to talk about what is and what is not appropriate online behavior.

Establish Rules for Online Behavior Although parents may want to be online with children as much as possible, that may not always be realistic. That is why it is important for families to develop their own set of clear, understandable rules for the online environment. **The CyberSavvy Family Pledge** located on the last page of this booklet provides a resource for creating a good set of rules for your family. Once you and your children feel comfortable with the Internet and have a clear understanding of the rules your family has established, you may then decide to allow your children some access to the Internet without your guidance.

Explore Parental Control Technology Options Parental control software can help parents supervise online activity even if you can't be with your children. Software packages offer the ability to:

- help keep children from sending out personal information online, such as their name, address or phone number;
- allow Internet access only to specific predetermined sites or to sites with specific predetermined characteristics;
- allow Internet access only at certain times of day; and
- provide a report of the places your children visit online.

Many companies provide software products that are inexpensive and easy to install on your computer. If you belong to a commercial online service such as America Online or CompuServe, this technology is included in your service and simply needs to be activated. If you access the Internet through an Internet service provider, then your provider may offer parental control technology options. And, some computer manufacturers deliver this software with their equipment.

Some companies that provide software or other services to help ensure a safe online experience are listed below. Online links to these products and services can be found at The DMA Web site, *http://www.the-dma.org/home_pages/consumer/parent.html*. If you would like to contact these companies directly, the following information will be useful.

Bess, The Internet Retriever
http://bess.net
206.971.1400

Net Shepherd
http://www.netshepherd.com
403.205.6677

Cyber Patrol
http://www.microsys.com
800.828.2600

Cybersitter
http://www.solidoak.com
800.388.2761

SafeSurf
http://www.safesurf.com
800.720.3638

InterGo
http://www.intergo.com
214.424.7882

SurfWatch
http://www.surfwatch.com
800.458.6600

Net Nanny
http://www.netnanny.com
800.340.7177

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In addition, a new technical standard called PICS (Platform for Internet Content Selection) provides a way to create Internet classification and blocking systems. Using PICS, organizations like the PTA or a religious organization can develop their own classification systems from which parents can choose. Currently, classification systems have been developed using the PICS technology to block sites having too much (as defined by the parent) indecent or otherwise inappropriate material. A number of organizations are now meeting and working to develop a similar system to address consumer privacy preferences. To learn more about this technology, visit the PICS web site at *http://www.w3.org/pub/WWW/PICS/*.

Shopping

Online Shopping and Privacy

The Internet provides families the opportunity to buy their favorite products and services without leaving the comfort of home. From major airlines to clothing, toy and cereal manufacturers, thousands of companies offer consumers both information about their products and the opportunity to purchase them. For many busy families, this means convenience, more product choices and increased ease in comparing prices.

In your local mall, stores are linked together by a long series of walls and walkways. Online, it is possible for Web sites to electronically link with others that are likely to attract consumers with similar interests. Your family can move easily from store to store at the click of a mouse.

Online marketers can provide real value to consumers who interact directly with them. Consumers can get specific questions answered promptly, and if the marketer knows something about individual needs and interests, consumers will get even better service.

That's why companies like to know who visits their online stores frequently, what visitors enjoy most and how they would like to see products and services improved. This information is obtained directly from consumers through online questionnaires, e-mail correspondence or by making a special note of where visitors spend the most time on that site. (See page 15 for more information on "cookies" technology.) Companies then use this information to help improve their sites, create better products, provide more efficient customer service and make marketing offers that match a particular consumer's interests, preferences or lifestyle. It is also important to remember that technology puts consumers in charge and gives them choices. If you would rather not be a part of the marketing process, you can notify companies on an individual basis to remove your information from their knowledge base. Many companies provide contact information including phone numbers, e-mail addresses or their physical location. You may want to find out about their privacy policies (many are available online) before you transmit information.

Choices

Just as stores in your local mall have different reputations and policies, you will find variations within the online environment as well. And as you might research information about any other merchant, you may want to find out more about an online company, particularly:

- its reputation;
- delivery policies;
- return or exchange policies; and
- information collection practices.

Smart Shopper

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▸ ▸ ▸ Visit The DMA Web site at http://www.the-dma.org

Resources

One resource to help you learn about specific companies is your local Better Business Bureau, which provides information for consumers. You can find the phone number for your Better Business Bureau in your local phone book, or your can contact them at *http://www.bbb.org*. **The Children's Advertising Review Unit** (CARU) of the Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc. (CBBB) is the industry-supported self-regulatory system for children's advertising in all media, including television, print, radio and the interactive electronic media. If you have a complaint or question about advertising you've seen online, write to CARU at 845 Third Avenue, 17th Floor, New York, NY 10022. Be sure to include the World Wide Web address if you have a specific question about online advertising and, if possible, a printed copy of the advertising in question.

You can also contact **Call For Action**, a leading consumer advocacy organization, at 301.657.8260, if you have a question, concern or complaint about a company doing business on the Internet. Call For Action is an international, non-profit hotline service, which provides free, confidential help with consumer problems.

The DMA also has developed industry principles for maintaining responsible marketing practices online. If you have a complaint or a question about online marketing practices, you can contact The DMA by writing to the attention of the Ethics and Consumer Affairs Department, The DMA, 1111 19th St., NW, Suite 1100, Washington, D.C. 20036-3603 or by visiting The DMA Web site at *http://www.the-dma.org*.

In addition, the federal government, all U.S. states, many local governments and a number of national and grassroots consumer groups can help you with questions or complaints. To get a complete listing of these offices, write the Consumer Information Center, Pueblo, CO 81009, and ask for the free *Consumer's Resource Handbook*, published by the United States Office of Consumer Affairs.

Get Started...

Let's Get Started!

Now that you have had a chance to learn a little more about the Internet, let's see if we can put that knowledge to work. On the following pages, you will find several exercises and activities your family can work through together to learn more about Internet privacy issues and develop your own rules for going online.

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Quiz

Testing Your CyberSavvy Smarts: An Internet Privacy IQ Quiz

Before we guide you through a tour of the Internet, it may be helpful to test your knowledge of some online basics and privacy practices. You may be surprised to see how much you already know about cyberspace and how much there is to learn. Once you have completed the quiz, you can find your IQ score by turning to page 9 and adding up your points. Remember, some of these questions may have more than one answer, so think about each one carefully. You'll learn more about all of these topics throughout the exercises.

1. How can our family communicate with other people on the Internet?

A. E-mail B. Chat rooms C. Newsgroups

D. Listservs E. All of the above

Answer: E. There are many ways people communicate online—through e-mail (sending and receiving messages to and from specific people), chat rooms (speaking directly to other people online in real time), newsgroups (posting messages in online "bulletin boards" for everyone to see and respond to) and listservs (automated e-mail communications to large groups of people). It is important for families to discuss what is and is not appropriate to communicate online. Some parental control software now helps families block the transmission of specific words and phrases, including names, addresses and telephone numbers.

2. Who uses the Internet to communicate directly with other people?

A. Kids B. Adults C. Schools

D. Businesses E. All of the above

Answer: E. All of the above and more. Clubs, organizations, even governments use the Internet to communicate directly with other people. Many post information about their organizations and activities online, and some sponsor their own online discussions, chat areas, newsgroups and listservs.

IQ

3. [illegible] talk directly to us online, even if we don't know them?

A. No B. Yes

Answer: B. The Internet is just like any other public place. You can communicate with other people from around the world, even if you do not know them personally. Many people meet new friends while they are online, but it is very important that your family discuss and create your own rules about talking to people you do not know on the Internet. The CyberSavvy Family Pledge may be a good starting point for your family to talk about and establish these types of family policies (see page 21).

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4. Is talking with someone over the Internet the same as having a private conversation?

A. Always B. Never C. Sometimes

Answer: C. As you know, people use the Internet in many different ways to communicate with each other. Sometimes, people speak to a lot of people at the same time in newsgroups and listservs, while other times they communicate one-on-one, usually through e-mail. It is important to know that people you meet in chat rooms and newsgroups may want to have a private conversation or send you personal e-mail. Your family should discuss your own rules for having those types of conversations and for determining what is and what is not appropriate to talk about. Remember, you should never give out personal information to strangers online.

Smarts

5. Why is it that some companies request that I complete a questionnaire or survey before I can move through their Web site?

A. To learn more about the people who visit their sites

B. To gather information for marketing and customer service

C. To provide a better service to customers

D. All of the above

Answer: D. There are several reasons why companies like to know information about people who visit their sites. Generally, it helps companies provide a better service to all customers. If a company learns that people of a certain age tend to visit their site often, then they can tailor the information they provide to that age group. Some companies may use this information to communicate with you about their products and services. If you have a specific question about a survey or a questionnaire you find online, you should contact the company directly.

6. Can browsing the Internet change or alter the information on the hard drive of my computer?

A. Yes B. No

Answer: B. No, the data on your hard drive is generally safe. But your browser (software that lets you surf the World Wide Web) does record where you've been on the Internet in a "history file," and some Web sites send an extra bit of data for your browser to store in a special file called a "cookie file." "Cookies" help Web site managers (or "Webmasters," as they are usually called) track and record information about individual visits to their Web sites. Tracking people's activity and preferences online enables Webmasters to keep their sites easy to navigate and relevant for viewers. It can also help make your online activity quicker and easier because some information about your interests is already stored and ready to use again if you visit a site regularly.

7. Are there places on the Internet that are designed especially for children?

Yes No

Answer: A. Thousands of schools and organizations have created Web sites specifically for children. Many sites provide interesting information and games that are easy for children to understand. Some online services also provide "kids-only" areas just for children. One of the best ways to find interesting sites for children is to listen to the sources you trust. Schools, parenting magazines and newspapers are all beginning to offer more information about "kids-only" online areas.

Internet

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Privacy

8. What kind of information could a Web site automatically read about our family when we first click onto that site?

A. Information about our computer system, browser and the general location of our Internet service provider

B. Information about our online purchases

C. Specific information about family members

D. No information at all

Answer: A. Most computers have stored information that can be read by some Web sites when you click onto their site. Those sites may be able to tell what kind of computer system you have, the company or entity you use to access the Internet and the site you visited just before reaching their site. It is important for families to remember that their online visits are not unnoticed.

9. How do I know if a World Wide Web site belongs to a business?

A. Because I have visited the site

B. Because the domain name in the World Wide Web address ends with ".com," which indicates that a business operates it

C. Because I have heard of the company

Answer: B. You'll learn more about domain names and Web site addresses in the upcoming tour. But for now, a simple rule to remember is that ".com" in a site's address usually means the site is a owned by a commercial business.

Cyber

10. How can we make our family's time online even more meaningful?

A. Spend time online together

B. Establish family rules for online behavior

C. Explore parental technology options

D. All of the above

Answer: D. Parents can do all of these things and more. Generally, the best way to ensure a meaningful experience online is to surf together. Sometimes, this isn't possible, and some parents will let their children explore online alone if the family has an established set of rules and policies in place. Parents can also employ helpful technology, such as parental control software, which allows parents to block access to sites that may have content the parent deems inappropriate for children. As discussed before, some software stops the computer from sending out specific words and phrases, including names, addresses and telephone numbers.

Scoring

Give your family one point for every question you answered correctly.

1. E	2. E	3. B	4. C	5. D
6. B	7. A	8. A	9. B	10. D

If you scored a...

10 Congratulations! Your family must be full of cyber-stars! Keep surfing together!

8-9 Great work, you already know a lot about the Internet! Keep up the good work, and you should learn even more as you complete this book!

6-7 Not bad! You'll become even more familiar with these terms as you work through this activity book and go online more often.

0-5 Your family may want to navigate together more often. You will be able to learn a lot from our Internet tour!

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A Family Tour of the Internet

Now that you have read a little about the Internet, you may want to spend some time with your children taking an imaginary online tour. This tour will help you better understand information use on the Internet and will give you the background needed to discuss privacy issues with your family.

Family Tour

CyberSavvy Parents (CSPs) can take their children on an actual online tour by following special instructions in italics. You can visit some of these sites on your own, or you can go straight to The DMA site http://www.the-dma.org to follow the online tour.

What exactly is the Internet?

The Internet is a worldwide electronic network of computers, including both personal computers and large networks. It allows people from around the world to talk to each other through text, graphics, moving images and sound.

The Internet was designed to be an open network. That means it is accessible to many different people from many different places. It was not originally designed for privacy protection, but to communicate broadly and easily to anyone hooked up by computer around the world. Because of its open nature, whatever we do or say in public forums online (for example in chat rooms or newsgroups) will be observable by others. It is also possible for anyone who sees your messages in public forums to send them to others or to keep a record of what you said without your knowing about it.

How can we access the Internet?

To access the Internet using a commercial online service (such as America Online or CompuServe) or an Internet access provider (such as your local telephone company), you will have your own user or screen name, as well as a password. The user or screen name provides the basis for your e-mail address and your online identity, while the password is the secret key used to access your family's Internet or online service account. Some families allow every member of the family to have unlimited access to the Internet, while in others parents control the password for the family's account.

Now, CSPs, go ahead and log on to your service. You can follow this guide on your own by typing in each Web site address provided, or you can visit the guide at The DMA Web site and proceed to the parents' section of the Privacy Action! page http://www.the-dma.org/home_pages/consumer/parent.html.

Access

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Things for Families to Think About If your online service allows you to choose your own user name or screen name, you may want to create one that does not directly identify you or your family by name, in order to maintain your privacy. You might also consider choosing gender-neutral names.

Network

Many people make up interesting and creative names to identify themselves online. But remember, an online name does not really identify a person. Your family should be aware that not all people are who they say they are online.

A password is the key that unlocks the Internet for your family. The first step to maintain control of your children's privacy is to decide whether your children should have access to your account password allowing them access to the Internet.

Passwords provide security so that no one else can use your online account. When creating a password, you may want to use an odd combination of letters and numbers that no one else will be able to guess easily. Remember, passwords are very similar to PINs (personal identification numbers) used by banks. They should never be given to anyone other than family members.

How can we talk to other people online?

E-mail *CSPs, find the place on your service where you can send e-mail. If you know the address of a friend or family member, take a few minutes to send them a message.*

E-mail is one of the most common ways to communicate online. This sort of communication is a lot like sending someone a letter. You can address an e-mail to a specific person or persons, and they can very easily respond to you. Just as in traditional mail, there may be some delay in communicating by e-mail because the person to whom you send a message can read and answer it at his or her own convenience. E-mail can be a private conversation between two persons, or it can be a shared communication between many people.

E-mail

Chat Rooms Another way for people to talk to each other online is in chat rooms (also called IRC — or Internet Relay Chat). A chat room is a public place where many different people talk to each other as if they were talking in a real room. There is very little delay in communicating with other people in chat rooms. What you type is seen almost instantly world-wide, and those who are watching can respond immediately. Usually when you enter a chat room, the people in the room receive a notice that you are participating, and your user name will be shown on the roster of participants. You will also be able to see the online names of the others participating in the conversation. Someone in the group, seeing that you have arrived, may choose to address some comments to you in front of the rest of the group. And sometimes a person will send you a private message that can't be seen by the others in the chat room. This can take place even if you don't type in a message to the group.

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Newsgroups There are many thousands of newsgroups (or bulletin boards, as they are sometimes called) on the Internet, each devoted to a special area of discussion; for example, fans of a particular TV show, a certain type of music, literature or science each have their own bulletin board. There is no way to know who or how many people read a newsgroup. Unless you post your own message, no one will know you are there. A newsgroup is different from a chat room because you do not talk directly to other people instantaneously. Instead, people post messages and responses on various topics to be read at any time, much like a real-life bulletin board.

Listservs

Listservs A listserv is an e-mail service that allows individuals or organizations to send information to hundreds of people at one time. Listservs are similar to mailing lists in the real world and are operated by individuals, companies and all types of organizations. When you subscribe to a listserv, you receive every piece of mail generated by that service, just like a mailing list where you receive all of the mail that an organization sends out. Some listservs only allow messages to be generated by the organizing company or individual; others let subscribers send their own messages to the participants on the service. Some listserv mailing lists permit others to see the addresses of everyone on the list, but most do not. And some listservs announce to the others on the list when a new subscriber joins. You may also find "moderators" on certain listservs who monitor the service and make sure the information being sent out is of interest to the people on the service.

Things for Families to Think About E-mail, chat rooms, newsgroups and listservs all provide children with a way to interact directly with other people, so it is important that families discuss appropriate behavior in all of these areas. Your family may want to establish rules about what can or cannot be said in these communications. Remember, some people may ask children to have a private conversation, and they may ask your children for personal information, such as their full name, address or phone number. Families should establish their own rules for these situations.

What is the World Wide Web?

WWW

Now let's enter the World Wide Web (WWW).

Many of you CSPs probably know how to do this already, though you may not have known that the World Wide Web is actually a part of the bigger Internet.

The World Wide Web (or the Web, as it is usually called) is a part of the Internet that houses "Web sites" that provide text, graphics, video and audio information on millions of topics. Web sites can be developed by companies, government agencies, schools or other types of organizations. Even individuals and families can develop Web sites—some even post pictures of themselves, their friends, their pets and other personal information.

A distinctive characteristic of the World Wide Web is that every screenful of information (commonly called a "page") usually has a number of pointers to other pages of information out in the Web. These pointers, or "links," are what give the Web its name; all of the links together form a web of information that spans the globe. "Surfing" the Web is actually exploring the different sites found within this web of links.

For more information on the World Wide Web, visit the World Wide Web Consortium at *http://www.w3.org/pub/WWW/WWW*.

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URLs

World Wide Web sites are identified by their URL or uniform resource locator, their "Web site address." The URL identifies the address or location of information on the World Wide Web, and it also can give you an indication of the type of organization that maintains the site.

For example, examining the URL, *http://www.the-dma.org*, we can determine that this World Wide Web site is likely to be the site of The DMA, and is a site operated by a not-for-profit organization.

Endings, or domains like ".org," indicate where the sites belong, for example, to schools (.edu), government agencies (.gov) or commercial entities (.com). The official site for the White House *http://www.whitehouse.gov* ends in ".gov" because it is a site operated by the government. In the future, we may see more domain names that further identify the source of the site.

You can also identify a Web site operated outside of the U.S. by its domain, such as ".fr" for French sites or ".jp" for Japanese sites. For example, we can determine that the site *http://www.premier-ministre.gouv.fr* is a French site because it ends in ".fr."

URLS

CSPs, you may want to visit some of these sites now.

Things for Families to Think About You may only want your children to visit certain parts of the World Wide Web. The URL and domain names may be one way to help you identify those areas with your children. However, it is important to remember that URLs and domains are not always accurate identifiers of information or of the owner of the site. You may wish to look at sites yourself before your children visit them.

While the URL gives a number of clues about the kind of information available within a certain Web site, you may sometimes find information on a site that you do not expect.

Commerce

How do businesses work online?

Many companies conduct business on the Internet using their own Web site. Some provide advertising, which is displayed on the Web sites of other organizations. Advertisements online are different from advertisements for newspapers and magazines because, on the Internet, you can choose to click on an ad, and move instantaneously to the Web site of the advertiser. You can also choose not to click on the advertisement at all.

To make certain that companies and advertisements you find online are authentic, you should look for information on the company's physical location, phone number and mail address. This information should be provided so that any consumer with a question can contact the company directly.

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Search Engines

How can we find information online?

Search Engines If you do not already know the location or URL of information you want to find on the Web, you can look for specific content using a number of sources. One of the most popular ways is through search engines, which allow people to locate information through the use of key words. Search engines provide a good starting place for finding information. However, just like using old card catalogs in the local library, the few words you search may not always accurately indicate what you find when you visit the site.

Conducting a search on the Internet is fairly easy. Some search engines are designed specifically for children and offer information that is mostly of interest to them. One such search engine you may want to try is called Yahooligans! and is found at *http://www.yahooligans.com*.

Let's try a search. In the search field you can type part of a Web site address, key word or a phrase about which you want information. *CSPs, You may want to try a search in Yahooligans. Look for information on your family's favorite hobby or pastime.* Once you enter the search term or terms, the search engine will identify a list of Web pages that match your request. From here, you can link directly to those pages by clicking on the highlighted and/or underlined text that your search generated.

Things for Families to Think About While some search engines are designed specifically for children, it is still important for parents to monitor their children's searches and the sites they visit.

Links In addition to using search engines, you can also find information just by "surfing" the Internet. You may have noticed that most Web sites offer links (or hyperlinks, as they are sometimes called) which take you directly from one site to another. Many times, Web sites will link to other places on the Internet that offer related information. By clicking on these links, you can move quickly through the Web. Hyperlinks are usually underlined and colored differently from the regular text.

Things for Families to Think About You can move very easily and very quickly from one Web site to another without always knowing the kind of information that will be available on the next Web site.

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Can people follow what we do online?

Mouse Tracks While you explore different Web sites, you and your children should be aware that your visits are not always anonymous. Some sites can immediately determine certain information about you when you visit that site, such as the type of computer system you use, the company you use to access the Internet and the last site you visited.

CSPs, you can see the kinds of information your computer can automatically transmit by visiting the Center for Democracy and Technology's privacy demonstration at http://www.13x.com/cgi-bin/cdt/snoop.pl.

Cookies Some Web sites electronically record information about your visit to their site by automatically depositing a piece of information in the "cookie" file on your computer. The cookie that is deposited allows a Web site to keep track of information about your visit, such as which parts of the site you visit. This information helps site operators determine the most popular areas of their site, and it helps them improve what they offer. Cookies also allow for more efficiency when revisiting a site, by saving and later recognizing information you may have already registered with that site. For example:

- Your preferences for visiting a certain area of the site can be stored in your cookie file so the next time you return, the section you like best might already be up and ready for you;
- You might be alerted to new areas of your interest when you return to a previously visited site; or
- Your past activity might be recorded in your cookie file so the site knows what you like, gives you better service when you return, or offers you products and services tailored to your interests.

Things for Families to Think About The file into which cookies are deposited is contained within the software you use to browse the Internet. Several of the most recent versions of browser software can notify you before a Web site places a cookie on your computer. Some browsers will let you deactivate the cookie file altogether if you choose. You can also periodically check and delete information stored in your cookie file. But remember the cookie technology is used to help you move more efficiently online.

Registration Web site operators can access information about their visitors in other ways, too. While some read information directly from your computer, others encourage visitors to register with their sites and ask people to enter their names, addresses, e-mail addresses and some information about their interests that may be used to contact them. Some Web sites ask visitors to complete a survey or a questionnaire before moving through the site. The information collected is used to determine who is visiting the site, what interests them, and what changes could be made to make their site, service or offers more valuable.

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Security

What do companies do to maintain privacy online?

Privacy Policies The DMA encourages companies and, in fact, organizations of all types, to develop and post their own privacy policies on their Web sites. These policies should tell what information is collected when you visit a site and how that information is used. If you have a problem finding an organization's privacy policy, you should contact the company directly and ask for its policy.

CSPs, The DMA's privacy policy can be seen on the following page of The DMA Web site, http://www.the-dma.org/privacy.html.

Encryption Many companies and other organizations use encryption technology to "scramble" information they send online. Using this technology, information is "encrypted" or converted into a code that can only be read with the appropriate electronic key. Encryption increases the level of security for transmitting information online, so that you can more securely send financial information, such as credit card numbers and account numbers for banking and shopping online.

CSPs, to learn more about this technology, visit the Web site known as Pretty Good Privacy http://www.pgp.com.

Find

How can we find other people online?

Personal Directories It is relatively easy to find information about people online. Directories, such as the *Yahoo! People Search*, *Switchboard* and *Bigfoot*, list e-mail addresses and other personal information, which may include names, addresses and phone numbers, for public use. Another service, Deja News, can help find where people have posted messages in online newsgroups. While these services can be valuable to help you find people, you and your family may choose not to have your names and e-mail addresses referenced online. To remove your information, you can contact the service directory and ask to have your name removed.

CSPs, you may want to look at the Switchboard site http://www.switchboard.com and the Yahoo! People Search http://www.yahoo.com/search/people/ to see if you are listed.

Personal Bios or Profiles Another way to find people is by looking for their personal biographies or profiles that are sometimes created by individuals and displayed by some online services. These profiles can provide a significant amount of personal information for anyone to see without permission, and they are usually just a click away. You may choose not to complete a profile, or you may decide to limit the amount of personal information you provide. Also, it is important to remember that some people may create profiles that do not accurately describe who they are.

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What Should I Do If...

▸ ▸ ▸ ▸ Parenting Skills for Real Online Situations

Now that you have learned first-hand what the Internet is all about, try these exercises to test your knowledge in real-life situations. Take a few minutes to work through these situations together. Talk about and write down your family's solutions for each. If you are not sure what to do, each situation includes some recommended solutions. But, remember, there are no right answers. Different families will have different rules.

Personal Information

I recently participated in a chat room with several other people, and someone from the group sent me a private e-mail asking me to send her my picture and address. She said she was a teacher and wanted to help me. Should I send her the information? And what should I do if she asks to meet me in person?

The first thing you should always do is tell a parent, teacher or other trusted adult when someone has asked you for personal information in an online conversation. As a general rule, you should never give out personal information online or meet anyone in person that you have met online, unless you have special permission from your parent. In some cases, if your parents feel it is safe for you to send information to a pen pal or a new friend, they may allow it. You and your family should develop your own policy about sending out personal information to people you meet online, and the next exercise in this activity book will help you.

Surveys

While surfing the Web, I found a site with an interesting game that I want to play. But before I can play the game, the site asked me to complete a questionnaire about my interests and hobbies. What should I do?

Some Web sites ask their visitors to fill out surveys or registration forms to learn about the people visiting their sites and to find out what kinds of information those people would like to see online. Sometimes, like in the real world, companies will offer games or prizes in return. In any event, they should tell you why they are collecting the information. If you are not familiar with the organization that has developed the Web site, you may not want to send any personal information to them. Your family should set rules for when and under what circumstances you are allowed to complete questionnaires online and what information you can provide.

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Web Stores

I was in a Web site that has its own store where I can buy lots of neat presents. I really want to buy a gift for one of my parents, but I don't know if I should. What should I do?

Families have different rules about ordering products online. Some families feel comfortable, especially with older children, buying items and sending credit card information online to companies they trust. But generally, most parents want their children to get permission before ordering anything online, even if it is for a special occasion. Your family should talk about a policy that works best for you.

A stranger sent me an e-mail that really scared me. I haven't told my parents yet, but I think I probably should. What should I do?

You should always tell a parent, teacher or other trusted adult immediately if someone sends you a scary or threatening e-mail. You should never respond to those e-mails. Instead, your parents can respond, notify your service provider or contact the police as necessary.

E-mail

I visited the Web site of a company that makes toys for kids and thought the site was pretty interesting. Later I found an e-mail message in my mailbox from the company inviting me back to see some new, similar items. What should I do?

Some people appreciate this kind of communication because it leads them to more information about things they may want. However, if you do not want to receive such e-mails, you should contact the person or organization directly and ask them to stop sending messages. If that doesn't work, you can file a complaint with your online service or Internet access provider who may be able to help.

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Password

While surfing the Web, someone sent me an e-mail asking for the password to my account. He said he needed to fix something in my system and could not do it without my password. Should I give it to him?

You should never give out your account password to anyone, even if they say they are calling from your online service or Internet access provider. Most service providers will not ask for your password online because it should always be kept private. Remember, your password is your personal key to the Internet and to your private e-mail. It should not be shared.

My parents and I have talked a lot about online privacy, and I know all about cookies. We have even programmed our Internet browser so that it notifies us every time a site tries to drop information into our cookie file. What should I do if I want to visit a site that will deposit information into my cookie file. Can I visit it anyway?

Technically, you can still visit the site by passing through or canceling the notification screen, but you should talk with your family about what you should do in these types of situations. Some families don't mind cookie technology, while others would rather surf the Web without it. Remember, cookies are often used by Web site operators to help make your time at that site quicker and more efficient, and they can be valuable to your online experience. For information about cookies, refer to page 15.

Directories

One of my friends found my phone number in an online directory. How did they get this information? Why is it there, and should I do anything about it?

There are some places on the Internet that provide directory services to help people find other people. Many services report that the information they provide, including e-mail addresses, physical addresses and phone numbers, can be found in most public places, through the phone directory or information services. If your family would rather not make this information available publicly, many of these directories offer opportunities to remove your name from their services by calling, writing or sending e-mail.

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Being Careful

I like to visit a lot of different places online, mostly Web sites, chat rooms and bulletin board areas. But my parents said to be careful not to let strangers know who I am online. How can I do this?

There are several ways you can keep your identity from other people when you are online. One of the most important ways, as we have discussed before, is to not give out personal information anywhere online — through e-mail messages, chat rooms, bulletin boards or other places. In addition, you can help prevent strangers from sending you e-mail messages by not participating in online chats, bulletin boards or listservs, so that people in those places will not be able to read your e-mail address while you are online. If you do want to participate, you may want to use a screen name that does not directly identify you. There is also technology, as we found through the Internet tour, that your family can use to keep your e-mail messages private and to keep Web sites from tracking your activity online. Finally, you may want to establish a rule about what part, if any, of your name, address or other information may be given online or in any public place.

While researching a school project, I accidentally found a site with a lot of pictures and words that did not look like it was meant for kids. What should I do?

One of the best things you can do is to let your parents know. They may be able to help you find more appropriate sites for your research, and they can help you steer clear of places that may not be meant for children. Parents, if you cannot be with your children while they surf the Web, you may want to consider using parental control software that can help you block access to sites you may deem inappropriate for children. See page 4 of this activity book.

Research

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▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ Talking with Your Family About the Online World

Now that you have had some time to discuss some of the important decisions you have to make online, you should think about developing your family's cyber rules. Below are several situations to think about with your family that may help. To complete this activity, read the first part of each exercise and try to determine what you and your family would do in those situations. Several choices have been provided to help you work through this exercise, or you can write in another choice.

Once you have completed this exercise, you can make some of your rules official by filling in the blanks of your family pledge on the next page. You can tear out the pledge if you want, and put it near your computer or in another special place to remind you of your family's Internet policy.

1. If I want to spend time exploring parts of the Internet or an online service, I will:

- ◯ Ask my parents to go online with me
- ◯ Notify my parents if I want to visit an area of the Internet we have not discussed before
- ◯ Ask for my parents' permission and then go online myself
- ◯ Another choice:

2. If I meet someone online (even if it is someone claiming to be my age) who asks for my address, school name or other personal information, I will:

- ◯ Not provide any information without my parents' permission
- ◯ Only provide the information my parents and I have discussed
- ◯ Report the incident to my parents
- ◯ Another choice:

Family

3. If I receive any e-mail messages that are scary, I will:

- ◯ Tell a parent, teacher or other trusted adult immediately
- ◯ Not respond to the message without my parents' permission
- ◯ Report the incident to my online or Internet service provider or call the police if I feel threatened
- ◯ Another choice:

4. If I want to play a game or visit a Web site but have to fill out a survey or registration form first, I will:

- ◯ Not fill it out unless I have my parents' permission
- ◯ Only answer the types of questions that my parents and I have agreed upon
- ◯ Not fill it out at all
- ◯ Another choice:

5. If I find something online that I would like to purchase, I will:

- ◯ Discuss the purchase with my parents
- ◯ Ask my parents to look at the product with me and check that the company and products are reliable
- ◯ Not buy anything without my parents' permission and assistance
- ◯ Another choice:

Choices

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Being CyberSavvy: Your Family Pledge

I (we), member(s) of the family, believe it is my (our) duty to use the Internet responsibly and safely and to follow the pledge we have created for our family. By signing this agreement, I (we) promise to explore the Internet safely and to uphold the responsibilities we have written below.

If I want to explore parts of the Internet or an online service,

I will

If a person I meet online asks for my address, phone number, school name, password or other personal information,

I will

If I receive a scary or threatening e-mail message,

I will

If I want to visit a Web site or play a game, and have to fill out a registration form,

I will

If I want to buy something from a store I have visited online,

I will

Special Family Amendments

If

I will

If

I will

Signed,

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On the day of in the year

▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ Tell Us What You Think

The DMA would like to know your thoughts on *Get CyberSavvy!* Please take a few minutes to complete the following questions, and mail your comments to Direct Marketing Association at: Ethics and Consumer Affairs Department, The DMA, 1111 19th Street, NW Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20036-3603; or send by fax, 202.955.0085. You can also e-mail your comments to consumer@the-dma.org.

This section is optional and may only be used to contact you for more information about your comments.

Name (optional):

Address (optional):

E-mail (optional):

Has *Get CyberSavvy!* provided information and tools to help you make choices and decisions for your family online?

Has *Get CyberSavvy!* helped you discuss online behavior and privacy with your family?

Do you feel more comfortable spending time online since reading and working these exercises?

What other information would you like regarding parenting and the Internet?

What other comments do you have?

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Also, please let us know if you have taken the CyberSavvy Family Pledge by checking here.

Thank you for your help! Enjoy your time online.

Thank You

Get Cyber Savvy! was produced by The Direct Marketing Association in cooperation with the Children's Advertising Review Unit (CARU) of the Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc. (CBBB) and Call For Action.

The Direct Marketing Association

The Direct Marketing Association (The DMA) is the largest trade association for businesses interested in database and interactive marketing, with more than 3,600 member companies from the United States and 49 other nations. Founded in 1917, its members include direct marketers from every business segment as well as the non-profit and public sector. As a long-time champion of consumer choice and a leading advocate of self-regulation, The DMA is working to ensure that consumers in the online environment are afforded opportunities both to learn about products and services of interest to them and to express their preferences regarding marketers' collection, use or dissemination of information. The DMA has developed and implemented self-regulatory principles for online marketing that are available, along with The DMA's ethical business practice guidelines, at The DMA Web site, *http://www.the-dma.org*. Also available at The DMA Web site is a special section designed specifically to help parents. If you have a complaint or question about online marketing practices, you can contact The DMA by writing to the attention of the Ethics and Consumer Affairs Department, The DMA, 1111 19th Street, NW, Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20036-3603 or by visiting The DMA Web site at *http://www.the-dma.org*.

Children's Advertising Review Unit (CARU)

The Children's Advertising Review Unit (CARU) of the Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc. (CBBB) is the industry-supported self-regulatory system for children's advertising in all media, including television, print, radio and the interactive electronic media. CARU operates under the direction of the National Advertising Review Council, a strategic alliance of the CBBB and the American Association of Advertising Agencies, the American Advertising Federation and the Association of National Advertisers. Since its founding more than 20 years ago, CARU has worked from within the industry to promote truthful and accurate advertising to youngsters that is sensitive to the particular nature of its audience. When advertising is found to be inaccurate, misleading or inconsistent with the **Self-Regulatory Guidelines for Children's Advertising**, CARU seeks changes through the voluntary cooperation of the advertiser. CARU's Guidelines can be found on the CBBB Web site, *http://www.bbb.org*. If you have a complaint or question about advertising you've seen online, write to CARU at 845 Third Avenue, 17th Floor, New York, NY 10022. Be sure to include the URL and if possible, a printed copy of the advertising in question.

Call For Action

Call For Action (CFA) is an international, non-profit consumer hotline service. The CFA network of 1,200 trained volunteers has been mediating consumer complaints for more than 34 years. Annually, Call For Action saves individuals and small businesses more than $30 million in lost goods, services and refunds. Its services are free and confidential. If you have a question, concern or complaint about a company doing business on the Internet, you can contact Call For Action by calling 301.657.8260 or by writing to 5272 River Road, Suite 300, Bethesda, MD 20816-1405.

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Thanks to the staff of the Technology and Society Domain of the World Wide Web Consortium for encouragement and technical review.

Additional single copies of *Get CyberSavvy!* are available through 1997 by writing to: Ethics and Consumer Affairs Department, The DMA, 1111 19th Street, NW, Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20036-3603. Multiple copies of two or more are available for $2.50 per copy. Note: *Get CyberSavvy!* is also available free of charge at The DMA Web site, *http://www.the-dma.org*.

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